Cover Crop Growth Has Roots in Oregon

By Mitch Lies,
GROWING Editor

It started about 25-years ago as a conversation at an agricultural trade show in Louisville, Kentucky, between a Tangent, Oregon, seed farmer and three Ohio dairymen. Today it is a vibrant and growing market for Oregon seed growers valued in the tens of millions of dollars. And it is improving soil health, preserving water quality and increasing corn and soybean yields in the Midwest.

The reach of Oregon’s cover crop seed trade, in fact, is now expanding into the Southeast U.S., where it is helping break down fragipan, a cement-like layer of soil that inhibits yields on an estimated 50 million acres of farmland. And work has been initiated in South Africa to see if cover crops can improve soil health there.

“In my career, it has been one of the more unique and satisfying enterprises that I have been involved with, because of the potentially large impact in the Midwest, and helping Oregon farmers with a new market,” said former Oregon State University Linn County Extension agent Mark Mellbye who has spent more than 20 years on developing the market, first as an Extension agent and since his retirement in 2011 as an independent contractor.

In addition to expanding market opportunities for Oregon seed growers, the development of this market is delivering significant environmental benefits, Mellbye said, primarily through reducing nutrient and soil runoff from Midwest farmland that is contributing to the dead zone in the Gulf of Mexico. It is the agricultural benefits, however, namely the improved yields cover crop pioneers are experiencing in the Midwest, that is driving this market expansion.

Keeping soil covered in winter months provides multiple benefits, Mellbye said, most of which translate into increased yields. In addition to protecting soil from erosion, cover crops add organic matter to soil, which improves soil health. And the roots of cover crops help aerate soil, facilitating water infiltration and creating pathways that allow corn and soybean roots to reach nourishing moisture deep in soil profiles even in dry summer months.

Cover crop usage started gaining momentum in the Midwest in the 1980s with a small number of progressive farmers who were experimenting with no-till farming, Mellbye said. The movement was still in its infancy when Don Wirth of Saddle Butte Ag in Tangent struck up that conversation with the three young Ohio dairy farmers in the mid-1990s.

At the time, nearly all Midwest dairy farmers left ground bare during the winter months after harvesting their corn in the fall. The Ohio dairy farmers, however, found that keeping ground covered in the offseason with annual ryegrass led to improved corn yields and even provided some spring forage options.

“They said that Oregon ryegrass is the best kept secret we’ve ever heard of,” said Wirth, now retired, who was attending the National Farm Machinery Show in Louisville that year as a representative of the Oregon Tall Fescue Commission.

Upon his return to Oregon, Wirth told Harrisburg, Oregon, grass seed farmer Nick Bowers, who at the time was chair of the Oregon Ryegrass Growers Seed Commission, formerly Linn County Extension agent Mark Mellbye, right, talks about the use of annual ryegrass as a cover crop with Chad Watts, executive director of the Conservation Technology Information Center, at the 2015 Farm Progress Show in Decatur, Illinois.

Continued on Page 8
COVID 19 and Your Extension Service

Who would have thought, at the end of 2019, what a long, strange year 2020 would be … and it is only May! These are uncertain times for sure, and while our Extension offices have closed for in-person visits, we are still answering our phones and conducting more and more programming online. Here is a short list of resources to help our customers in this time of health and financial uncertainty. On several of the following pages of GROWING we have listed resources specific to programs.

Department of Human Services offices are OPEN!
We are applying the use of social/physical distancing and encouraging all customers to send inquiries, applications, and to complete appointments via phone, email and online services. The health of all Oregonians is of utmost importance and we feel these measures are a necessary step to protect everyone.

https://www.oregon.gov/DHS/COVID-19/Pages/Home.aspx or Twitter @OregonDHS

Department of Human Services: SNAP, TANF, ERDC, OHH, Domestic Violence assistance
Online at: https://apps.state.or.us/onlineApplication/or https://one.oregon.gov/(medical)

Branch offices:
- Albany: (541) 967-2078, (866) 279-3290, fax (541) 967-2099
- Corvallis: (541) 757-4201, fax (541) 757-4110
- Lebanon: (541) 259-5860, fax (541) 258-6042
- Newport: (541) 265-2248, fax (541) 574-0173

EBT (Oregon Trail card) replacement for lost and stolen cards: 1-855-328-6715 https://www.ebtedge.com/gov/portal/PortalHome.do

Childcare information for Parents and providers (DPU): 1-800-699-9074

24/7 mandatory reporting for children, elderly, and disabled: 1-855-503-SAFE

Unemployment benefits: Call 1-877-FILE-4-UI or file online https://www.oregon.gov/employ/unemployment/pages/default.aspx

Legal Aid: https://lasoregon.org/
Linn/Benton: (541) 926-8678 1-800-817-4605
Lincoln: (541) 265-5305 1-800-222-3884

Community Services
Consortium: housing & utility assistance, Veteran/youth/family services. Call 541-928-6335 or email info@communityservices.us

211 info: Call 211 or https://www.211info.org/ for up to date information and referrals.

ADRC Aging and Disability Resource Connection
ADRCmail@oc wcog.org
https://www.adrcforegon.org/
Linn/Benton: call (541) 967-8630
Lincoln: call (541) 336-2289
Pollywog for resources and information on early learning and children under 5: https://pollywogfamily.org/ or call 541.917.4884
United Way Linn, Benton, Lincoln Counties: http://www.unitedwaylbi.org/

*Resource list includes school meal site information and other local resources.

Apply Now for LCEA Legacy Scholarships

The Linn County Extension Association (LCEA) began in 1985 in response to the severe budget crisis that Linn County Extension had been experiencing. Over the years they advocated for stable funding and continued to increase understanding of the programs of the Extension Service. The association identified communicating with Extension participants as a primary concern, and supported the Extension newspaper (UPDATE – now GROWING) as the major means of communication with the residents of Linn County. Throughout the duration of the not-for-profit, funds were garnered to assist the OSU Linn County Extension Service with various projects and one of their major projects was to award scholarships for college tuition to deserving Linn County residents attending college.

After 32 years, the LCEA board dissolved the association in 2017. The LCEA Board Treasurer transferred all LCEA funds to the Linn County Treasurer to hold for OSU Linn County Extension Service’s dispersal of two (2) annual $1,000 Legacy Scholarship Awards for two successful applicants currently residing in Linn County.

The scholarship is based on residency in the geographical areas served by Linn County Extension, the applicant’s financial need, GPA of 2.75 or higher, involvement in 4-H or other Extension programs, community involvement, and/or work experience. The deadline to apply is June 1, 2020.

For information and application visit https://beav.es/4Wi.
Interested in receiving our monthly gardening newsletter?  
Sign up at https://beav.es/4oc

Join OSU Extension Master Gardeners Online

Facing tough garden challenges as you start growing your own food? Join our LIVE online Veggie Gardening Q&A’s. Spend some quality time with OSU Extension Master Gardener volunteers and our extended community of gardeners to get warmhearted advice and smiles – from the comfort of your home.

Check our events calendar for upcoming dates & times: https://extension.oregonstate.edu/program/mg/linn-benton/events

Updates on Annual Events

Canceled:
Through the Garden Gate Tour 2020  
This event, originally scheduled for June 20 is canceled due to the public health situation. Please plan to join us for the next Through the Garden Gate in 2021!

Postponed: New date TBD
Benton County Master Gardener Plant Sale  
Due to current circumstances, our annual Plant Sale extravaganza has been postponed with a new date TBD at such time as the public health situation permits. We are hoping restrictions on events will ease, and you can once again shop the thousands of blooming perennials, natives, shrubs, trees, houseplants and edibles to grow a beautiful garden. Our prices will still be low and the variety of plants inspiring.

May-June Gardening Calendar for Western Oregon

The Oregon State University Extension Service encourages sustainable gardening practices.

Preventive pest management is emphasized over reactive pest control. Identify and monitor problems before acting and opt for the least toxic approach that will remedy the problem. The conservation of biological control agents (predators, parasitoids) should be favored over chemical controls.

Use chemical controls only when necessary and only after thoroughly reading the pesticide label. First consider cultural, then physical and biological controls. Choose the least-toxic options (insecticidal soaps, horticultural oils, botanical insecticides, and organic and synthetic pesticides — when used judiciously).

Trade-name products and services are mentioned as illustrations only. This does not mean that the Oregon State University Extension Service endorses these products and services or intends to discriminate against products and services not mentioned.

MAY

Planning
• Prepare and prime irrigation system for summer.
• Use a soil thermometer to help you know when to plant vegetables. Wait until the soil is consistently above 70 degrees to plant tomatoes, squash, melons, peppers and eggplant.
• Place pheromone traps in apple trees to detect presence of codling moth. Plan a control program of sprays, baits, or predators when moths are found.

Maintenance and Clean Up
• If needed, fertilize rhododendrons and azaleas with acid-type fertilizer. If established and healthy, their nutrient needs should be minimal. Remove spent blossoms.
• When selecting new roses, choose plants labeled for resistance to diseases. Fertilize roses and control rose diseases such as mildew with a registered fungicide, either organic or synthetic.

Planting and propagation

Continued on Page 4
Pest Monitoring and Management
- If an unknown plant problem occurs, contact the Master Gardener plant clinic, for identification and future management options.
- Manage weeds while they are small and actively growing with light cultivation or herbicides. Once the weed has gone to bud, herbicides are less effective.
- Trap moles and gophers as new mounds appear.
- Leafrolling worms may affect apples and blueberries. Prune off and destroy affected leaves.
- Monitor aphids on strawberries and ornamentals. If present, control options include washing off with water, hand removal, or using registered insecticides labeled for the problem plant. Read and follow all label directions prior to using insecticides. Promoting natural enemies (predators and parasitoids that eat or kill insects) is a longer-term solution for insect control in gardens.
- Spittle bugs may appear on ornamental plants as foam on stems. In most cases, they don’t require management. If desired, wash off with water or use insecticidal soap as a contact spray. Read and follow label directions when using insecticides, including insecticidal soap.
- Control cabbage worms in cabbage and cauliflower. 12-spotted cucumber beetles in beans and lettuce, and maggots in radishes. Control can involve hand removal, placing barrier screen over newly planted rows, or spraying or dusting with registered pesticides, labeled for use on the problem plant. Read and follow label directions when using insecticides.
- Tiny holes in foliage and shiny, black beetles on tomato, beets, radishes, and potato indicate flea beetle attack. Treat with Neem, Bt, or use nematodes for larvae. Read and follow label directions when using insecticides.
- Prevent root maggots when planting cole crops (cabbage, broccoli, collards and kale) by covering with row covers or screens, or by applying appropriate insecticides.
- Monitor rhododendrons, azaleas, primroses and other broadleaf ornamentals for adult root weevils. Look for fresh evidence of feeding (notching at leaf edges). Try sticky trap products on plant trunks to trap adult weevils. Protect against damaging the bark by applying the sticky material on a 4-inch wide band of poly sheeting or burlap wrapped around the trunk. Mark plants now and manage with beneficial nematodes when needed.
- Snap and lima beans, Brussels sprouts, cantaloupes, slicing and pickling cucumbers, dill, eggplant, kale, peppers, pumpkins, summer and winter squash, onions, potatoes, tomatoes, and watermelon.

Start Your Victory Garden from Home
- Start with a research-based introduction to growing food at home. Our favorite is Growing Your Own from OSU Extension. Learn when to plant, how to prepare your growing space, stopping pests and more: https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/em9027
- Where can you get garden supplies? Plant Something Oregon has a list of suppliers that offer a range of options for safer shopping. Find them here: https://plantsomethingoregon.com/coronavirus/
- Where to get your soil tested? Master Gardener volunteers are not currently able to test soil pH, so gardeners will need to send samples to soil testing labs found in Analytical Laboratories Serving Oregon: https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/ec628
- Use research-based resources to find garden solutions. OSU Extension offers straightforward tested resources to build resiliency for growing gardens in this amazing virtual collection: https://extension.oregonstate.edu/gardening
- Connect with real gardeners to get help!

Though our offices may be closed, OSU Extension Master Gardeners are still available to answer your gardening questions by phone or email. Please leave us a detailed voicemail and a callback number. We’re also checking email! Share your photos of plant or insect problems with us. Master Gardeners will research your question and give you a call back or send an email. In Benton County: 541-713-5000 or email: bentonmg@oregonstate.edu. In Linn County: 541-967-3871 or email: linn.mg@oregonstate.edu.


Hanging Baskets | Vegetable & Herb Starts | Houseplants
Pottery | Tools & Supplies | Native Plants

CURBSIDE PICK-UP & LOCAL DELIVERY AVAILABLE

Shonnard’s Nursery | Home & Landscape
OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK
541-929-3524
www.shonnards.com
6600 SW Philomath Blvd Corvallis

LCB 5718
soil temperatures are above 55 degrees. If root weevils are a consistent problem, consider removing plants and choosing resistant varieties.

- Control slugs with bait or traps and by removing or mowing vegetation near garden plots.
- Monitor blueberry, raspberry, strawberry and other plants that produce soft fruits and berries for spotted wing drosophilas (SWD).

### JUNE

**Planning**
- Construct trellises for tomatoes, cucumbers, pole beans and vines.

**Maintenance and clean up**
- Prune lilacs, forsythia, rhododendrons and azaleas after bloom.
- Fertilize vegetable garden one month after plants emerge by applying a side dressing alongside rows.
- Harvest thinnings from new plantings of lettuce, onion and chard.
- Pick ripe strawberries regularly to avoid fruit-rotting diseases.
- Use organic mulches to conserve soil moisture in ornamental beds. An inch or two of sawdust, bark dust or composted leaves will minimize loss of water through evaporation.
- After normal fruit drop of apples, pears and peaches in June, consider thinning the remainder to produce a crop of larger fruit.
- Make sure raised beds receive enough water for plants to avoid drought stress.
- Mid-June: If green lawns are being maintained through the summer, apply 1 pound nitrogen per 1,000 square feet to lawns.
- If you want a green lawn, water frequently during periods of heat and drought stress. Irrigate 0.25 inches four to six times per week from June through August. Measure your water use by placing an empty tuna can where your irrigation water lands.

**Planting/propagation**
- Plant dahlias and gladioli.

**Pest monitoring and management**
- First week: Spray cherry trees for cherry fruit fly, as necessary, if fruit is ripening.
- First week: Spray for codling moth in apple and pear trees, as necessary. Continue use of pheromone traps for insect pest detection.
- Learn to identify beneficial insects and plant some insectary plants, such as alyssum, Phacelia, coriander, candytuft, sunflower, yarrow and dill, to attract them to your garden. Check with local nurseries for best selections. For more information, see Encouraging Beneficial Insects in Your Garden.
- Blossoms on squash and cucumbers begin to drop; this is nothing to worry about. Cherries may also drop fruit; this is not a major concern.
- Monitor azaleas, primroses and other broadleaf ornamentals for adult root weevils. Look for fresh evidence of feeding (notching at leaf edges). Try sticky trap products on plant trunks to trap adult weevils. Protect against damaging the bark by applying the sticky material on a 4-inch wide band of poly sheeting or burlap wrapped around the trunk. Mark plants now and manage root weevils with beneficial nematodes when soil temperatures are above 55 degrees Fahrenheit. If root weevils are a consistent problem, consider removing plants and choosing resistant varieties.
- Control garden weeds by pulling, hoeing or mulching.
- Control aphids on vegetables as needed by hosing off with water or by using insecticidal soap or a registered insecticide.

**Garden Calendar continued from Page 5**

Feverfew (Tanacetum parthenium) is a white flowered perennial that propagates easily by seed.

The caterpillars of the beautiful cinnabar moth help control the weed tansy ragwort.

Get ready for raspberry season!
Safe, Healthy Food Preservation Questions?

Food preservation recipes and instructions can be found by visiting https://extension.oregonstate.edu/mfp/publications

Food Safety and Preservation Hotline will be a resource again this year from July 13 to October 9, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.; 1-800-354-7319

Have a food preservation or safety question before the date that the food preservation hotline begins in July? Try using Ask and Expert. Your question will be answered by knowledgeable staff and volunteers. Visit https://extension.oregonstate.edu/ask-expert

Canning Timer and Checklist app can be downloaded for free at https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/pnw689

Garden Calendar continued from Page 5

- Watch for 12-spotted beetles on beans, cucumbers and squash and cabbage worms or flea beetles in cole crops (cabbage, broccoli, Brussels sprouts). Remove the pests by hand or treat with registered pesticides.
- Birch trees dripping a sticky fluid from their leaves means that aphids are present. Control as needed.
- Use yellow sticky traps to monitor for cherry fruit fly. About 1 week after the first fly is caught, spray cherries at appropriate intervals.
- Last week: Second spray for codling moth in apple and pear trees, as necessary.
- Continue monitoring blueberry, strawberry, cherry and other plants that produce soft fruits and berries for spotted wing drosophila. If these pests are present, use an integrated and least toxic approach to manage the pests.

Indoor gardening
- Move houseplants outdoors for cleaning, grooming, repotting and summer growth.

Kids + Home + Time = Opportunity to Build Essential Life Skills

By Hallie Locher, OSU Dietetic Intern

Not running out of food is a top priority for families. More time at home provides parents an opportunity to involve family members in the meal planning and preparation process. Getting kids in the kitchen can engage kids and build essential life skills! It can help teach kids to inventory existing foods and plan meals using food items at home.

At this time, many families in our community are facing economic constraints. Establishing a monthly budget and food budget can help lower stress.

Making a monthly budget
- Identify fixed expenses (for example, rent, insurance, loans, phones)
- For yearly items, divide the expenses by 12 and set aside that amount each month.
- Set aside money for any credit card debt/balances (it’s recommended to pay off the ones with the highest interest rate first).
- Identify flexible expenses (for example, food, gas, clothing, utilities, medical, and entertainment).
- Split up food budget in to four weeks, so you have equal amounts through the month.
- Evaluate each month. Record how much of that budget was spent and what is left over.

Planning your meals
Following your budget may be easier if the entire family gets involved in planning the meals and snacks. Make a weekly menu for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Go to the grocery store with a plan and grocery list. Visit www.foodhero.org to find tasty, quick recipes that fit your budget!

Tips to stretch your food dollars
- Compare unit prices
- Large containers often have the best unit price, but buy the size that fits your budget and recipe.
- Buying from the bulk section of a supermarket allows you to purchase just the amount you need, reducing waste and saving money on packaging.
- Grow your own food (currently the OSU Master Gardener Program is offering a free on-line course https://workspace.oregonstate.edu/course/master-gardener-series-vegetable-gardening?hsLang=en)
- Start a garden. Use available space or garden containers.
- Avoid empty calories
- Choose fruits and vegetables over junk food.
- Eat at home. Save already prepared meals for special occasions.

Resources
Is Screen Time Affecting Your Child’s Nutrition?

By Hallie Locher, OSU Dietetic Intern

As we practice social distancing, are your kids glued to their tablets or phones? Do you struggle to have family meals or conversations without the distraction of a screen? Any time spent watching TV or using electronic devices such as computers, tablets and mobile phones is classified as screen time. The more screen time children have, the less time they are being active. Being inactive can disrupt our normal appetite signaling and lead to passively eating more than is needed. Screens can also expose our children to distraction of a screen?

To passively eating more

How to Limit Screen Time:
- Keep screens out of the bedroom
- Plan how much TV you will watch as a family
- Prioritize unplugged, unstructured playtime
- Don’t use screen time as a reward
- Create a technology free zone during meal times

As a family, it is important to set designated times to sit down and enjoy meals together without the distraction of screens. It is an opportunity to support one another and gives everyone a chance to be heard. Families should create boundaries with screen time and limit how long and where it can happen around family dinners. Turn off the TV while eating and enjoy the time you have to spend with each other. Remember to allow time for physical activity before or after a meal.

Families who share meals together on a regular basis reap the following benefits:
- More nutrition meals
- Kids eat a wider variety of foods and are less picky eaters
- Allows parents a chance to be a role model and set healthy eating example and polite table manners
- Families tend to eat less because they are eating slower since they are talking

Pantry Pests

Several different types of insects and a mite may infest stored dry foods, pet foods, birdseed, and garden or lawn seeds. Most common are Indian meal moths, rice weevils, and red flour beetles. Saw-toothed grain beetles, granary weevils, seed weevils, confused flour beetles, lesser grain borers and mites are less often identified.

Most pantry pests have four stage life cycles: egg, larva, pupa and adult. The adults seldom feed: however, the larvae (worm-like grubs or caterpillars) are voracious feeders. Pupae may be found where feeding occurs or the larvae may crawl along shelves and walls seeking a place to pupate. Upon emergence, the adults mate and females lay eggs. There may be one to several generations each year, depending on the temperature and species. They may first be noticed as moths flying near the food storage area, as webbing in food containers, or as larvae or adults in stored foods.

The treatment is similar, no matter what insect infests the stored foods.

Since cereals, spices, herbs, dried fruits, candy, garden seeds, and birdseed or dry pet foods may be infected, all food and feed packages must be inspected. If infested, all packages should be removed from the food storage area and the shelves, sides, and ceilings, cracks and crevices vacuumed and then washed.

Infected packages can be discarded, or heated for ½ hour at 140°F, or placed in a freezer for three or four days at 0°F or below to kill eggs, larvae, pupae and adults.

Packages should be isolated in canisters with tight lids or placed in glass or plastic jars with lids until the insects are gone. However, it is a good idea to store food in sealed containers at all times.

It may be necessary to repeat this procedure several times before the problem is solved.

Traps and sprays are available to treat infestations in storage areas, but thorough and repeated cleaning is usually sufficient to eliminate the insects if all infected food containers have been removed and the area is cleaned well. Be sure to follow instructions for any cleaning or control products exactly and allow shelves to dry before replacing items. These insects most often enter our food supply in warehouses. Some can chew through packages. Re-infestation is most often due to insects hiding in cracks and crevices during the cleaning process and then emerging to invade new packages.

Sanitation is more effective than pesticides in controlling these pests in the home.

Prevention: Inspect all packaged and bulk foods when you bring them home.

Store dry foods in air-tight, insect-proof containers to prevent an infestation if pantry pests are introduced.

Clean up all food spills inside the cupboards. Pay close attention to corners and cracks.

References:


http://extension.oregonstate.edu/linn

References:


Pantry Pests

Several different types of insects and a mite may infest stored dry foods, pet foods, birdseed, and garden or lawn seeds. Most common are Indian meal moths, rice weevils, and red flour beetles. Saw-toothed grain beetles, granary weevils, seed weevils, confused flour beetles, lesser grain borers and mites are less often identified.

Most pantry pests have four stage life cycles: egg, larva, pupa and adult. The adults seldom feed; however, the larvae (worm-like grubs or caterpillars) are voracious feeders. Pupae may be found where feeding occurs or the larvae may crawl along shelves and walls seeking a place to pupate. Upon emergence, the adults mate and females lay eggs. There may be one to several generations each year, depending on the temperature and species. They may first be noticed as moths flying near the food storage area, as webbing in food containers, or as larvae or adults in stored foods.

The treatment is similar, no matter what insect infests the stored foods.

Since cereals, spices, herbs, dried fruits, candy, garden seeds, and birdseed or dry pet foods may be infected, all food and feed packages must be inspected. If infested, all packages should be removed from the food storage area and the shelves, sides, and ceilings, cracks and crevices vacuumed and then washed.

Infected packages can be discarded, or heated for ½ hour at 140°F, or placed in a freezer for three or four days at 0°F or below to kill eggs, larvae, pupae and adults.

Packages should be isolated in canisters with tight lids or placed in glass or plastic jars with lids until the insects are gone. However, it is a good idea to store food in sealed containers at all times.

It may be necessary to repeat this procedure several times before the problem is solved.

Traps and sprays are available to treat infestations in storage areas, but thorough and repeated cleaning is usually sufficient to eliminate the insects if all infected food containers have been removed and the area is cleaned well. Be sure to follow instructions for any cleaning or control products exactly and allow shelves to dry before replacing items. These insects most often enter our food supply in warehouses. Some can chew through packages. Re-infestation is most often due to insects hiding in cracks and crevices during the cleaning process and then emerging to invade new packages.

Sanitation is more effective than pesticides in controlling these pests in the home.

Prevention: Inspect all packaged and bulk foods when you bring them home.

Store dry foods in air-tight, insect-proof containers to prevent an infestation if pantry pests are introduced.

Clean up all food spills inside the cupboards. Pay close attention to corners and cracks.

Cover Crop Growth Has Roots in Oregon

Continued from Page 1

Mellbye, who was with Linn County Extension at the time, got involved in the effort after Albany-area farmer Tim VanLeeuwen suggested he collaborate with former University of Illinois Extension agent Mike Plumer on annual ryegrass trials in the Midwest.

“Our Extension Service agronomists had had a long history of working with the grass seed industry,” Mellbye said, “so it was kind of a natural role for me to get involved in.”

Plumer, who died in 2017, had been researching different cover crop options for about a decade before Mellbye began, Mellbye said, but never annual ryegrass. The Extension agents quickly realized that with its deep root system and aggressive growth, annual ryegrass proved an outstanding cover crop.

Today about six percent of Oregon’s annual ryegrass seed production goes into the cover crop market, Mellbye said, with the remainder going primarily into the forage market.

For years, cover crop advocates, enthused over the benefits the crops brought Midwest operations, expected the market to explode. That hasn’t happened, but cover crop use has expanded. Just in the five years between the 2012 and the 2017 Censuses of Agriculture, cover crop usage grew 50 percent, as 15.4 million acres in the U.S. had a cover crop in 2017, up from 10.3 million acres in 2012.

Several Oregon farms have formed companies to service this market, including KB Seed Solutions in Harrisburg, GS3 Quality Seeds in Monmouth and Saddle Butte Ag. These companies today produce a wide variety of seeds for the market, seeds often used in cover-crop blends. Saddle Butte, for example, today produces mustard seed, hairy vetch, common vetch, radish and other novel seed crops for the market, in addition to the more traditional cover crop species, annual ryegrass and clovers.

“Just to drive around the valley here and see the number of crops that are going into that cover crop market is amazing,” Wirth said.

One reason that cover crops are used on only a small percentage of the nearly 200 million acres of U.S. farmland in corn and soybeans is because many Midwest growers are hesitant to adopt a new practice that requires more work and more upfront costs. And there have been cases where cover crops have not delivered as growers had hoped. Midwest corn and soybean growers, for example, have at times struggled to get annual ryegrass and other cover crops established after harvest and before winter temperatures halt plant growth. And killing off cover crops in the spring so they don’t compete with the primary crop for water and nutrients has at times been difficult.

But the Oregon seed industry has worked and continues to work with progressive Midwest growers and researchers to overcome these obstacles, and solutions are emerging. Some Midwest growers today, for example, are inter-seeding annual ryegrass in late summer, when corn is still growing, to ensure the ryegrass gets established before cold winter temperatures halt plant development.

And recent developments in research that show annual ryegrass outperforms all other crops when it comes to breaking up fragipan, also is attracting interest among growers. Some growers are utilizing grants now available through the USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service to help offset start-up costs.

Whether this market ever takes off like some hope remains to be seen. In the meantime, the steady growth of the cover crop market is providing economic opportunities for Oregon farms and environmental and agronomic benefits for Midwest operations.

And that conversation between Wirth and those progressive Ohio dairymen today is speaking volumes.
Do You Live in the Southern Willamette Valley Groundwater Management Area?

The Southern Willamette Valley Groundwater Management Area (GWMA) was declared in 2004 because of high nitrate contamination in a 230 square mile area of the Willamette Valley. A multi-year, multi-stakeholder process is addressing the nitrate contamination issue. The GWMA encompasses portions of Lane, Linn, and Benton counties and includes five cities (Corvallis, Harrisburg, Monroe, Junction City, and Coburg). Scientific studies have found nitrate to be associated with methemoglobinemia (blue baby syndrome), diabetes, negative reproductive outcomes, and various forms of cancer. Public water suppliers must test their water regularly but rural homeowners are not required to do so and are often unaware of contamination issues.

Where Can I Find the Action Plan?

The Southern Willamette Valley Groundwater Management Area (GWMA) Action Plan serves to guide activities aimed at reducing nitrate contamination in the area’s groundwater. The complete Action Plan is available in a pdf format at http://wellwater.oregonstate.edu/swvgwma

History of the GWMA

Extensive testing in 2000-02 by the Department of Environmental Quality concluded that nitrate was a contaminant of concern in groundwater in the Southern Willamette Valley. Nitrate was found at greater than 7 mg/L in more than 20 percent of samples analyzed in 2000 and 2001. Those with high levels were re-sampled in 2002 and more than 90 percent of those samples were still above 7mg/L. Nitrate was found at many locations at concentrations greater than the public drinking water standard (10 mg/L) and at more than three times the standard in several locations. DEQ now monitors the GWMA groundwater quality quarterly by sampling at 41 well locations. Our pollutant load reduction target is to reduce all nitrate levels in the groundwater to less than 7mg/L.

How Can I Get Involved?

Check out the Southern Willamette Valley Groundwater Management webpage at http://wellwater.oregonstate.edu/swvgwma to learn about ways to be involved. We are always looking for committee members, host sites for neighborhood nitrate screenings (driveways are a favorite), and outreach volunteers.

Frequent Questions about Wastewater and Septic Systems and Coronavirus

Will my septic system treat COVID-19?

While decentralized wastewater treatment (i.e., septic tanks) do not disinfect, EPA expects a properly managed septic system to treat COVID-19 the same way it safely manages other viruses often found in wastewater. Additionally, when properly installed, a septic system is located at a distance and location designed to avoid impacting a water supply well.

Can I get COVID-19 from wastewater or sewage?

The World Health Organization (WHO) has indicated that “there is no evidence to date that COVID-19 virus has been transmitted via sewerage systems, with or without wastewater treatment.”

Do wastewater treatment plants treat COVID-19?

Yes, wastewater treatment plants treat viruses and other pathogens. Coronavirus, which causes COVID-19, is a type of virus that is particularly susceptible to disinfection. Standard treatment and disinfectant processes at wastewater treatment plants are expected to be effective.

Is it okay to flush disinfecting wipes?

EPA urges Americans to only flush toilet paper. Disinfecting wipes and other items should be properly disposed of in the trash, not the toilet. These wipes and other items do not break down in sewer or septic systems and can damage your home’s internal plumbing as well as local wastewater collection systems. As a result, flushing these wipes can clog your toilet and/or create sewage backups into your home or your neighborhood. Additionally, these wipes can cause significant damage to pipes, pumps, and other wastewater treatment equipment. Sewer backups can be a threat to public health and present a challenge to our water utilities by diverting resources away from the essential work being done to treat and manage our nation’s wastewater. Disinfecting wipes, baby wipes, and paper towels should NEVER be flushed.
Opportunities for the Ranch and Home

By Shelby Filley

I know many of you have plenty of work to do on the farm or ranch. However, now is a time when you can catch up with or start new projects. Below are some ideas for educational programs, ranch chores, and some Internet resources you and your family may be interested in to replace some of the time you would spend in town. I hope you find these useful and enjoyable!

**Beef Quality Assurance (BQA; online)** – A national program that raises consumer confidence through offering proper management techniques and a commitment to quality within every segment of the beef industry. My last Growing article was about the BQA programs I was going to provide in person. That has been put on hold, so I wanted to make sure you know about online trainings. The BQA program offers several certification options including the following:

- Cow/Calf (https://bqa.beeflearningcenter.org/default.asp) – For those who breed and sell weaned calves;
- Stocker/Backgrounder (https://bqa.beeflearningcenter.org/default.asp) – For those who raise and sell feeder cattle;
- Feedyard (https://bqa.beeflearningcenter.org/default.asp) – For those who feed and sell fed cattle;
- Transportation (https://bqa.transportation.beeflearningcenter.org/) – For those who truck cattle (Professional driver or Farmer-ranch).

See more about BQA and find websites have good information on your own operation. Let me know if you have questions on or need assistance with the BQA program. Certification is for three years. Update yours now if needed or add another certificate on another sector of the beef industry.

**Production Records** – You have probably heard the old adage about not being able to manage what you do not measure. If you apply this to an animal or pasture production goal, recordkeeping can help you determine whether you are progressing in the intended direction. I suggest today is a good opportunity to review recordkeeping on your ranch and commit to keeping the best records you can. Make sure you have an ID for each animal. Ear tags work well, but you can also freeze brand numbers on the hip of cattle. Use temporary paint numbers on sheep and neck chains on goats.

For record keeping, use simple, pocket-sized books you can carry out to the field and collect data as you go about tending the livestock. Some include calendars. There is the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association “Red Book” with space for breeding dates, calving dates, calf weights and sex, dam and sire, and pasture location with in and out dates, and more. See https://store.nbea.org/Departments/Redbooks.aspx ($7.00). There are similar ones for sheep and goats from Kentucky (https://www.kysheepandgoat.org/record-books; free) or magazines like The Shepherd (http://www.theshepherdmagazine.com/; free with subscription). You can use as is or transfer data to a larger notebook or computerize spreadsheet for increased opportunities to sort and study the information. You can design your own record keeping system or use an existing one. There are also programs for use on your phone or automated systems for your livestock handling facility.

**Sheep/goat production records**

- Univ. of Maryland, Small Ruminant program http://www.sheep101.info/201/recordkeeping.html
- National Sheep Improvement Program (http://nsip.org/)
- Ovissey (www.cansheep.ca; 613-233-9543; 888-684-7739)

**Cattle production records**

- CHAPS from NDSU (https://www.ag.ndsu.edu/DickinsonREC/chaps-software-1; 701-231-7658)
- Cattle Max (https://www.cattlemax.com)

**Animals and COVID-19 (Coronavirus)** – The following websites have good information on this topic.

- Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) has compiled information from various sources for your reference to help support your business and to protect yourself, employees, and consumers. See https://www.oregon.gov/ODA/agriculture/Pages/COVID-19.aspx and scroll down to Resources.
- Center for Disease Control (CDC) has information on Covid-19 and animals, plus a lot more at https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/animals.html. Here is a list of key points:
  - Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses. Some cause illness in people, and others cause illness in certain types of animals.
  - Some coronaviruses that infect animals can sometimes be spread to people, but this is rare.
  - We do not know the exact source of the current outbreak of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). The first infections were thought to be linked to a live animal market, but the virus is now primarily spreading from person to person.
  - The first case of an animal testing positive for the virus in the United States was a tiger that had a respiratory illness at a zoo in New York City.
  - We do not have evidence that companion animals, including pets, can spread the virus that causes COVID-19 to people or that they might be a source of infection in the United States.
- CDC is aware of a very small number of pets outside the United States reported to be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 after close contact with people with COVID-19.
- Treat pets as you would other human family members – do not let pets interact with people or animals outside the household. If a person inside the household becomes sick, isolate that person from everyone else, including pets.
- Further studies are needed to understand if and how different animals could be affected by the virus that causes COVID-19 as well as how this might affect human health.
- This is a rapidly evolving situation and information will be updated as it becomes available.
- For more information, see COVID-19 and Animals Frequently Asked Questions.

**Science information for the kids (and you)** – https://www.asas.org/meetings/virtual-resources. I got this link from the American Society of Animal Sciences (ASAS), the professional organization to which I belong. This collection of programs is being promoted by ASAS, so should be a solid source of information on animal production and not contain harmful material on farming and ranching. Please enjoy this collection knowing scientists closely related to animal production reviewed it.
A Moment in Time...Small Farms, Local Food and COVID-19, April 11th, 2020

By Teagan Moran, OSU Small Farms Program

As I sit down to write this, I recognize that I compose this article in a moment in time where our understanding of our world is changing daily. Therefore, some of what I share now may have changed or evolved even by the time you read this. Our Small Farms team knows that access to credible information is important during any public health crisis. We have been updating FAQ: Small Farms, Local Food, and COVID-19: What do you need to know? This has resources aimed towards farmers, and can be found in both English and Spanish on our site: https://smallfarms.oregonstate.edu/.

We have learned in the past few weeks that when information changes so rapidly, keeping information updated and credible can be a great challenge. My days have been filled with receiving and sorting information from farmers, partner organizations, and county, state, and federal agencies. I will now attempt to summarize some of that to offer a small glimpse of what our local food system and small farm agricultural community is looking like today. There are so many interconnected efforts and stories, it would be impossible to paint the whole picture. I want to start by sharing the feeling that I have been carrying around with me, and which I hear echoed in conversations with farmers; that of cautious optimism. Farmers and ranchers are resilient and adaptable even in the best of times, and COVID-19 is shining a light on the beauty of our diverse and vibrant local food system.

The FAQ that the US Department of Agriculture has posted on their website https://www.usda.gov/coronavirus demonstrates some of the issues being highlighted by COVID-19. One of the biggest is that of our food chain. The number one question is: Will there be food shortages? The USDA reports that to date: there are no nationwide shortages of food, although in some cases the inventory of certain foods at your grocery store might be temporarily low before stores can restock. Food production and manufacturing are widely dispersed throughout the U.S. and there are currently no wide-spread disruptions reported in the supply chain. That being said, grocery stores have been increasingly seen as risky environments to enter due to increased exposure. Distributions have been delayed and depending on where you live, supplies have been short.

People are starting to think differently about the number of hands that have touched their food, as well as how far it has traveled to get to them. People are starting to prepare for the possibility of food shortages and are turning to the security of local food purchases. This is where the small farm community comes in as a majority of small farms are diversified operations who sell direct to consumer. It should also be noted, that there are farms who sell primarily to restaurants or to wholesale accounts with institutions that have been closed. These farmers are struggling as they try to quickly identify a whole new market channel, while also trying to predict how long these closures will last. What will the demand be in a month? How do they supply those businesses down the road while staying afloat now?

As people have been sheltering at home, local food sales have gone up. One strong indicator of an increase in local food purchases has been the spike of Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) subscriptions. CSA’s are where customers purchase a regular (usually weekly) produce, meat, or mixed box from a farm for a certain number of weeks. Typically, customers make an advance payment to receive a discounted rate, and this enables farms to have some capital in the start of the season (when they need it the most). CSA’s have evolved over the years, and now there are

Continued on Page 19
By Jenifer Cruickshank

In Oregon, we are blessed to have an active, diverse dairy industry. Dairy farmers work hard year-round to produce safe, nutritious milk that is processed regionally into milk to drink with meals and snacks or is made into more than a dozen different products. It’s easy to eat locally when you shop in the dairy case.

There are 12 licensed dairies between Benton and Linn Counties. Milk from these farms go to Darigold, Safeway, or Organic Valley or, in the case of one farm, is processed on site. Some of that milk from south Willamette Valley farms gets bottled into cartons and jugs. Some gets made into creamer, cottage cheese, sour cream, and yogurt. Some of it becomes cheese (made right in Benton and Linn Counties). All of these products are produced locally and are available locally.

After being picked up from the farm by a milk truck (you may have seen these tanker trucks on the highway), the milk is delivered to a milk processing plant. Before the milk is unloaded, samples taken at the farm by the milk truck driver are tested in the plant lab for milk components (fat and protein percentages) and antibiotic residue. Any milk found to be contaminated with antibiotics is dumped. It never enters the processing plant. The farmer who goofed and accidentally did not divert milk from a sick cow who was being treated must pay for the entire truckload of milk. This type of incident happens very, very rarely.

Speaking of dumping milk, at the time of this writing (mid-April), you may have read or seen stories about truckloads of milk being dumped and at the same time have seen restrictions on milk purchases in grocery stores. COVID-19 has turned most things upside down, including the milk supply chain. Milk produced in a region is balanced (bought and sold) among the different processing plants and cooperatives so that the fluid milk market is satisfied first (fluid milk being the most perishable product). Once that need has been met, then the milk goes to the manufacturing of other dairy products.

When the expected destination for certain products suddenly disappears (like schools and restaurants closing), that ripples up the chain. A processing line in a plant that normally puts milk into half-pint cartons for kids at school can’t instantly become a line that puts milk into gallon jugs for the supermarket. The 7 percent of the US milk supply that normally goes to schools now can’t. And the summer vacation adjustment (partly that more milk goes to ice cream plants) hasn’t happened yet. Likewise, restaurants that used to buy 200 pounds of shredded cheddar cheese (in 20-pound bags) per week now are only buying 60 pounds. Or zero pounds. That leaves more cheese in cold storage awaiting a buyer and causes more processing line back-ups.

Sometimes, in times like these, even though the cows are blissfully doing their thing, there is no place for their milk to go. In this case, the milk gets dumped. Milk is very nutritious, and people are a much better destination than the manure-handling facilities on dairy farms or being spread directly on fields, which is where most dumped milk goes. (It is never released into waterways.) Granted, the nutrients will ultimately nourish the soil where they are deposited, but that’s not the best use. In some cases, milk with no home is being added to the diets of the cows that produced it, although cows give much more than they would be fed. To date, milk dumping hasn’t happened in the Pacific Northwest, but it has happened in other regions of the country so you may have seen information about it on social media or the news.

You can shop confidently in your favorite dairy case knowing that the milk came from your bovine neighbors and their farmers. How do you know for sure? Look for the plant code stamped or printed on the packaging. Oregon plants start with “41;” Washington plants start with “53.” (Some Oregon milk goes to Washington and vice versa.) See the photos for examples.

Oregon has almost 30 cheesemakers, large and small. If you want to drink locally produced organic milk or eat yogurt made from it, you can. If your preference is for milk bottled on farm, you can get that, too. Maybe it’s all about ice cream? There’s lots of that produced locally as well. Enjoy our good fortune to live in a region with so much dairy goodness!

Dry Farming Project continued from Page 11

farmed conditions, as well as grafting tomatoes onto different drought-resistant rootstocks. In addition, this study will evaluate the utility of soil management strategies (mulching, fertilization) and cultural management (staking, pruning, shading); the profitability of dry farmed tomatoes, help farmers promote and market dry farmed tomatoes.

- Solar Co-Location with Dry Farmed Vegetables – Amy Garrett received funding for a 3-year project with the National Renewable Energy Lab InSpire project to evaluate quality and productivity of dry farmed vegetables interplanted in a solar array. Potatoes responded to the partial-shading by the panels with a 9.5 percent increase in yield in the 2019 trial and will be included in the 2020 and 2021 trials.

The Dry Farming Project hosts multiple field days every summer in August/September, and will be again this year, be it virtually or in-person! Dates and details will be announced in June. For more information on dry farming visit: https://smallfarms.oregonstate.edu/dry-farming or contact Amy Garrett (amy.garrett@oregonstate.edu).
Apple Coddling Moth Control

By Erica Chernoh

Codling Moth (Cydia pomonella) is the most common pest of apples in Oregon. Each spring codling moths begin to emerge around the time apple trees bloom, in the south Willamette Valley this typically takes place around the first week of May. By about late May, female codling moths lay eggs that soon hatch into the larvae that cause the damage associated with this pest. The larvae tunnel into the core of the fruit where it then feeds. Later on, the larvae exit the fruit, pupate, and emerge as adults to complete a second life cycle. In warm years, a third life cycle may occur as well.

Pheromone traps can be useful for detecting the presence of adult moths, but they are ineffective as a control measure. Generally, some type of spray is necessary to prevent damage from codling moths (for a list of chemicals registered for home use, see: https://pnwhandbooks.org/insect/tree-fruit/apple/apple-codling-moth). If using a pheromone trap, place the traps in the upper one-third of the tree canopy by mid-May. Inspect the traps weekly, and when two or more moths are caught in one trap for two consecutive weeks, then make the first spray. Subsequent sprays will depend on longevity of pesticides used but should be made when the first product has weathered off or at least two moths per trap are captured in one or more of the traps.

If you are not using pheromone traps and are using a calendar approach, then you should target the 1st spray for the first generation about 15 to 21 days after full petal fall (all petals are off) followed by a second spray about 3 weeks later. A third spray for the second generation can be made in early July followed by another about 3 weeks later. Depending on both the selected product and the weather, more than one application may be necessary to prevent codling moth damage. When using any pesticide, always follow all label instructions carefully.

For more information on managing codling moth and other pests of apples and pears, you can view online or download a free copy of the OSU Extension Publication ‘Managing Diseases and Insects in the Home Garden’ (EC 631) here: https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/ec631

Thinning Fruit Trees

Fruit trees will often produce more fruit than the trees can support structurally. Thinning the fruit is important to increase the size of the fruit, protect branches from breaking, and to reduce alternate bearing (i.e. a heavy crop one year followed by a light or no crop the next year). Apples, pears, plums, peaches, and nectarines all benefit from fruit thinning. Trees will naturally thin themselves, and it is best to wait until after natural fruit drop to manually thin the fruit. For stone fruits (peaches, plums and nectarines), natural fruit drop typically occurs in early June (referred to as June drop). It is difficult to identify and remove defective fruit when small, and thinning too early can occasionally result in split pits in stone fruits, especially peaches. On the other hand, if you wait too long to thin you run the risk of reducing final fruit size and increase risk of limb breakage. In the south Willamette Valley, thinning typically takes place between May for early ripening varieties and mid-June for late ripening varieties. It is best to thin as early as possible and before the fruit are about the size of a quarter in diameter.

When thinning, always retain the largest fruit possible. Apples can be thinned within 40 days full bloom (or with 20 days of petal fall), and pears within 60 days of full bloom. It is worth noting that Bartlett pears will often thin themselves. Apples and pears produce a cluster of flowers and fruit from each bud, and should be thinned to one fruit per cluster six to eight inches apart. If it is a light crop year, then you can leave two fruit per cluster. Stone fruits produce one fruit per bud, and fruit should be thinned from trees within 60 days of full bloom. Plums should be thinned to four to six inches apart, peaches and nectarines should be thinned to about five to seven inches apart.

http://extension.oregonstate.edu/linn
How to Talk with Children About the Coronavirus

(source – Oregon Department of Education)

Children are naturally curious. The closing of schools affects children directly. As a result, they will likely have many questions about what the virus is, why schools are closed, and why they have limited access to friends and family. When speaking with children, it is important to do the following:

- Reassure children that you are doing everything that you can to keep them safe.
- Children will respond to what you say and how you say it, so do your best to stay calm and remain reassuring.
- Make sure that children know that they can come to you when they have questions. Make time to speak with them, and have that time be as uninterrupted as possible.
- Be honest with them. When accurate information isn’t available, children often think of the worst-case scenario. Don’t ignore their concerns but explain that some people have COVID-19. Let them know that schools are closed to slow the spread of the virus across the state, not necessarily because there are cases in their school.
- Avoid language that may lead to blame or stigma. Remind them that the virus can make anyone sick regardless of their race or age.
- Pay attention to what children hear on the television or radio, and see online. Make sure to vary what they are seeing and hearing, and encourage them to practice a digitally healthy lifestyle. Too much information focused on COVID-19 can cause children to experience anxiety or panic.
- Teach children everyday actions to stop the spread of germs, like how to wash their hands and appropriate social distancing behavior.
- Provide information that is honest, accurate and age appropriate. Make sure that you have conversations about things other than the Coronavirus.
- Keep a consistent schedule. Regular meals, bedtimes and activities can help children to feel safe and secure.
- Explore online learning opportunities. Some schools will be offering classes online, and some vendors like Audible are offering audio recordings of select children’s books for free during the outbreak. Check your school district for more information.
- Keep yourself and your family safe by staying home when you’re sick, covering your coughs and sneezes with a tissue, washing your hands often with soap and water and cleaning frequently touched surfaces and objects. Let children know that they play a very important role in preventing the spread of COVID-19.
- Keep yourself informed. Your child’s school district should be providing regular communication with families. This includes calls, emails, text messages and other methods that they already use to communicate. If you’re not hearing from your district during a closure, get in touch with your school principal or district superintendent.
- Have fun! Do things that make your family feel better in times of stress, such as watching movies, reading or playing games.

Keep Explanations Age Appropriate

- Early elementary school children need brief, simple information that should balance COVID-19 facts with appropriate reassurances that their schools and homes are safe and that adults are there to help keep them healthy and to take care of them if they do get sick. Give simple examples of the steps people take every day to stop germs and stay healthy, such as washing hands. Use language such as “adults are working hard to keep you safe.”

- Upper elementary and early middle school children may be more vocal in asking questions about whether they truly are safe and what will happen if COVID-19 comes to their school or community. They may need assistance separating reality from rumor and fantasy. Discuss efforts of school and community leaders to prevent germs from spreading.
- Upper middle school and high school students are able to discuss the issue in a more in-depth (adult-like) fashion and can be referred directly to appropriate sources of COVID-19 facts such as state and local health authorities. Provide honest, accurate and factual information about the current status of COVID-19. Having such knowledge can help them feel a sense of control.
- High school seniors are uniquely affected by school closures. They may experience fear and

Oh, the Places We Will Go - Next Year!

Spring is the time of year in Benton County 4-H when we typically get hundreds of students outside to connect them with the natural world. This year, as we all are experiencing, is different. So, in order to keep students, staff, and volunteers healthy and safe our spring educational events listed below have been canceled. We are using this time to improve our programs and we look forward to seeing all of our students, teachers and families next year!

- • 4-H Wildlife Stewards Summit – Celebration of Student Learning and hands-on educational activities provided by community partners. See page 20 to learn about the Virtual 4-H Wildlife Summit to be held on June 3-5.
- • Forests, Organisms, Creeks youStudy (FOCUS) – Five day long sessions of hands-on field programs taught by staff and volunteers at Beazell Memorial Forest – 4-H staff developing a video to supplement 2021 program.
- • Camp White Oak – spring break overnight camp held at the 4-H Center in Salem.
- • Get Outdoors Day – Daylong fun, family friendly outdoor event held with over 25 community partners at College Research Forest – See you next year in late May 2021!

4-H Ambassadors Video Project to Keep Fellow Members Informed

The Benton County 4-H Ambassadors are 9-12th graders who have taken on leadership responsibilities at the county program level. Their responsibilities include promoting the Benton County 4-H program to youth and their families, community partners and key stakeholders. The Ambassadors came up with the idea to create short, two- to three-minute educational videos. These videos include topics like “how to put together a 4-H record book” and project advancement steps focusing on animal science projects including horses, swine, guinea pigs and pigeons, as well as shooting sports, food preservation, and more.

Through this process, the Ambassador team members also are learning how to make and edit their own educational videos. One ambassador, Julia W., who is taking the lead on coordinating this effort, shared that she has learned so many new skills during this project, including the dynamics of videography and working on film editing software. Videos will be shared with other 4-H members when the project is completed.
Keeping Youth Engaged Without Overwhelming Them

In this time when education, work, and entertainment are all delivered using technology, it can be easy to get into a rut of just getting by. The stress can be overwhelming when the news is flooded with reports of COVID-19.

4-H members are fortunate to have an escape from the current stress of the world by returning to some semblance of normalcy and working on their 4-H project skills. Although they can’t currently meet in person with their clubs, 4-H members from around Benton County are creating educational videos for others, bonding over Zoom meetings, and more!

With all of the added online resources available, sometimes it’s healthy to take a break and do some more hands on projects at home. Here are a few that we suggest:

• Work on completing a 4-H project Advancement step;
• Update 4-H Resume;
• Mentor a younger 4-H member in their club through phone calls or by other means;
• Practice with their project (baking for their family, handling their animal, etc.);
• Visit 4-H.org to get access to free activities for at home learning.

It’s a trying time for everyone, but 4-H has many ways to help members cope. Contact your 4-H club leader or 4-H staff if you have questions about how to get involved.

Two of our Benton County 4-H Ambassadors have also written short statements about the impact of COVID-19 on their 4-H experience and how to stay involved.

**How COVID-19 Impacted My 2020 4-H Experience**

I have been in 4-H for six years now, and I am deeply involved with the dog project, County Ambassadors, Teens as Teachers, and other leadership projects.

The coronavirus has been detrimental to this year’s 4-H experience for youth all across America. Since this is my senior year of high school, I feel that the timing could not have been worse for me, personally. My dog club, Power Paws, has been training and preparing for our annual pre-fair in late April that had to be postponed and possibly cancelled. Pre-fair is an opportunity for youth in our club to see what they need to improve on, and get a feel for talking with judges, and so on. Our club also volunteers at the Chintimini Kennel Club shows in late April, however this had to be cancelled as well. It is difficult to watch all this time I could have spent with my club and all of these people that I hold so close to my heart be thrown away.

If I had told myself one year ago that this was the last time I would be doing these activities with my club despite having another year to go, I would have made so much more of the moment. I never thought that everything I have been looking forward to all year could be taken away at any moment, let alone because of a pandemic.

This school year has been especially hard for me to find motivation and reason, and I am so thankful that 4-H has been able to provide that for me. Since 4-H has shaped me into the young adult I am today, I was looking forward to giving back and making the most of my last year of 4-H. I understand that county fair and other activities will still occur (thankfully), but it is heartbreaking to be missing out on so much my senior year.

I wish I could go back in time to even two months ago and tell myself to do as much with my club right now and enjoy every second of it. The coronavirus felt surreal and so far away until they cancelled school and all activities in Oregon. Even then it still felt like a fever dream. Springtime is always the busiest time of year for me, so to go from struggling to balance choir, 4-H, tennis, and school, immediately to having significantly too much time on my hands nearly gave me whiplash. I am looking forward to this all being over; I know there is a light at the end of the tunnel. I proposed the idea of sending video clips of games to play with your dog, and fun ways to stay engaged with 4-H while in quarantine to my club, so I am excited to do little things like that. I can only hope that people are following guidelines and doing all they can to end this pandemic as soon as possible, however all I can do is pull my own weight.

— Cameryn G.

**Keeping in the 4-H Spirit During COVID-19**

The coronavirus pandemic has really turned everything upside down, with sports being shut down and now schools. So you may now be wondering, what about 4-H? I’m here to give you a few tips and tricks to help keep in the 4-H spirit.

• Make a plan with your club to hold meetings digitally: You can use Zoom, but only a certain number of people can join for a certain amount of time if you don’t have full access. Try out some of these digital meeting apps and help your club leaders out. Try this for group study sessions, or just to talk to each other.
• If you have an animal project: Make sure you are still working with your animal, as I write this, Fair is still happening, let’s keep our animals ready!
• Figure out your possible statics: Now that we have

**Continued on Page 16**

**Service through Sewing**

4-H members and families in Benton County are putting their sewing skills to good use by sewing fabric masks to donate to local healthcare workers. This isn’t just an activity for those with current sewing projects. 4-H members in all project areas are pitching in to help our healthcare workers and community!

After sewing masks, they can be picked up from their front doors if families aren’t comfortable dropping them off at local drop sites. There is currently a drop site designated at the Benton County Public Library parking garage (645 NW Monroe Ave., Corvallis) from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m., Monday–Friday. There are also resources for those who want to sew masks but don’t have the materials. Check the Benton County Recovers website for materials and drop site details at https://bentoncounty.recovers.org/resources.

Since elastic can be abrasive for some users, those interested in making masks can also use patterns that have ties rather than elastic. If you would like more information about this project, patterns to use, and how to get pickups scheduled, please email Elli at elli.korthuis@oregonstate.edu.
Fun and Engaging Websites to Check Out

When you can’t get outside or just need some new ideas for engaging your family, check out these web links. Many have wonderful adventures and activities for the whole family.

- Skype with a Scientist: Interactive question and answer Zoom meeting with a scientist. Learn about grey whales, crows, dinosaur diseases and more. https://www.skypeascientist.com/skype-a-scientist-live.html
- College of Atmospheric Sciences Outreach: compilation of https://ceoaos.oregonstate.edu/outreach/virtual-learning-resources/ Oregon STEM Hub - Mark Hatfield Science Center: At home activities for students and family’s https://oregoncoaststem.oregonstate.edu/
- OSU Extension Outdoor School Program Office: Weekly resource sets for observations, journal prompts, and online activities that parents/guardians and teachers can use to support students during the upcoming week. Spanish/English https://outdoorschool.oregonstate.edu/educators/educational-resources-for-stay-home-save-lives/
- NSTA - national science teachers association daily do’s https://www.nsta.org/dailydo/
- Oregon Public Broadcasting Learn and Grow - resources for many age groups https://www.pbs.org/parents/learn-grow/
- Cornell Lab or Ornithology: so many resources to learn about birds. https://www.birds.cornell.edu/home Example - learn about bird anatomy in an interactive tutorial. https://academy.allaboutbirds.org/features/birdanatomy/
- Marion County 4-H: 4-H at Home/4-H en Casa – STEM activities – downloadable pdf – new lessons weekly, Spanish and English https://extension.oregonstate.edu/4h/marion
- Benton County Historical Museum https://bentoncountymuseum.org/index.php/exhibitions/online-exhibitions/
- Visit Corvallis https://www.visitcorvallis.com/

Youth Members Find Ways to Teach Others

Riley Bond and Luke Milburn have been active members of Linn County 4-H for the last seven years and have always enjoyed sharing their knowledge with other members. With the current social distancing mandate in place, 4-H clubs aren’t able to meet. Riley and Luke took this opportunity to find a different way to share their expertise. These two members have been competitively showing poultry and rabbits for their entire 4-H careers, both at the county and state level. They produced videos of health checks, showmanship, and proper attire for a show and put them up on YouTube for members to access.

- Rabbit showmanship vet check: https://youtu.be/KoEMsmWynuA
- Full rabbit examination: https://youtu.be/908lgrCoZ4o
- Appropriate show clothes: https://youtu.be/vCJYSR6D-I
- Poultry showmanship vet check: https://youtu.be/FhMXqd22oUo
- Full poultry vet check: https://youtu.be/-E-7ZgnEZLs
- Basic chicken handling skills: https://youtu.be/UumhoAUbVKI

Keeping Youth Engaged continued from page 15

Riley Bond and Luke Milburn have been active members of Linn County 4-H for the last seven years and have always enjoyed sharing their knowledge with other members. With the current social distancing mandate in place, 4-H clubs aren’t able to meet. Riley and Luke took this opportunity to find a different way to share their expertise. These two members have been competitively showing poultry and rabbits for their entire 4-H careers, both at the county and state level. They produced videos of health checks, showmanship, and proper attire for a show and put them up on YouTube for members to access.

- Rabbit showmanship vet check: https://youtu.be/KoEMsmWynuA
- Full rabbit examination: https://youtu.be/908lgrCoZ4o
- Appropriate show clothes: https://youtu.be/vCJYSR6D-I
- Poultry showmanship vet check: https://youtu.be/FhMXqd22oUo
- Full poultry vet check: https://youtu.be/-E-7ZgnEZLs
- Basic chicken handling skills: https://youtu.be/UumhoAUbVKI

Keeping Youth Engaged continued from page 15

Riley Bond and Luke Milburn have been active members of Linn County 4-H for the last seven years and have always enjoyed sharing their knowledge with other members. With the current social distancing mandate in place, 4-H clubs aren’t able to meet. Riley and Luke took this opportunity to find a different way to share their expertise. These two members have been competitively showing poultry and rabbits for their entire 4-H careers, both at the county and state level. They produced videos of health checks, showmanship, and proper attire for a show and put them up on YouTube for members to access.

- Rabbit showmanship vet check: https://youtu.be/KoEMsmWynuA
- Full rabbit examination: https://youtu.be/908lgrCoZ4o
- Appropriate show clothes: https://youtu.be/vCJYSR6D-I
- Poultry showmanship vet check: https://youtu.be/FhMXqd22oUo
- Full poultry vet check: https://youtu.be/-E-7ZgnEZLs
- Basic chicken handling skills: https://youtu.be/UumhoAUbVKI

Extra time on our hands, try out a new project that interests you. Make sure to keep in mind the possible statics you want to complete for fair.
- Keep studying: Make a Quizlet with terms or questions that you may be struggling with and study them in your free time. You can make this for others, or just yourself. It will be beneficial either way. Make sure that you have access to the resources needed to study, if you have any questions, ask your leaders.
- Stay in touch with your fellow club members: Remember that everyone is going through the same thing right now, and nobody deserves to go through it alone. Even if it’s just a simple text message asking how you are doing, they are sure to appreciate it.

Remember we are all going through this together. Keep studying, keep completing your advancements, and keep working on those statics. Stay Safe!

– Alexa L.
Field Journaling Fun for You and Your Family

By Maggie Livesay

Journaling is a wonderful way to record your thoughts and observations. During this time of social distancing, explore your backyard, take a walk around the block, or just observe what is out your window. Write and draw your observations, questions, any weird and funny things happening in your environment. Like all naturalists, all you need is paper and a pencil, and of course, add in some colored pencils or watercolors to record what is in your inquiring mind.

Start each day with simple observations – date your page, add the time, and the weather. Is it sunny, cloudy, or raining? Write it out or draw weather icons. Check the temperature using a thermometer if you have one, or describe how it feels on your skin.

Adopt a plant or tree to observe to watch over time, or seeds. Go back and visit the same plant, and see how it changes over time. Make a list of words to describe it: colors, textures, and shapes. Write a silly poem or story that uses words from your list. Want more? Watch for birds, make a map of your neighborhood, and look for insects. If you look closely, you can even find nature in the cracks of a sidewalk!

Together ask curious questions, and by the way, it’s okay not to know the answers! Maybe you wonder: why do I see insects flying around flowers, what is making holes in the leaves, or why is dirt brown? Write down all your questions, even if they feel silly. It’s your journal so have fun with it.

Here is a word riddle to get you started. Example: Red-tailed Hawk.

**Pick an animal or plant:**
1. Write one word below that describes you
2. Write two words below that describe what you look like
3. Write three words below that describe how you move or where you live
4. Write two words below about how you contribute to the ecosystem where you live
5. Write another word below that describes who you are

1. Bird
2. Large, Rusty tail
3. Soaring, Perching, Diving
4. Predator, Consumer
5. Red-tailed Hawk

Try your riddle on a friend, can they guess who you are?

4-H Central Weekly Booklet

While you are staying at home, check out the 4-H Central Weekly Booklet that is in both English and Spanish. This booklet provides activities and recipes that families can do together with things that they most likely already have at home. Each Monday, a new booklet comes out and can be found on the Marion County 4-H webpage. [https://extension.oregonstate.edu/4h/marion](https://extension.oregonstate.edu/4h/marion)

Youth Tractor Safety Certification 2020

The crops are still growing, the farmers are still farming, and farms are still going to need summer employees to help with harvest. As Extension professionals, we are still finding ways to provide the training and certification that is required for youth before they work on a farm. The Youth Tractor Certification Course is a 22-hour program designed to teach safety as it relates to driving and managing farm implements. It offers both classroom and hands-on tractor driving experiences, for youth ages 14–17 who are interested in summer employment opportunities in the upcoming agricultural season.

**Youth Tractor Safety Certification 2020**

**When:**
- Monday, June 15th, 8am-5pm
- Tuesday, June 16th, 8am-5pm
- Wednesday, June 17th, 8am-5pm
- Friday, June 19th, 8am-5pm
- Monday, June 22nd, 8am-5pm
- Tuesday, June 23rd, 8am-5pm
- Wednesday, June 24th, 8am-5pm
- Thursday, June 25th, 8am-5pm
- Friday, June 26th, 8am-5pm

**Where:**
Doerfler Farms, 12333 Silver Falls Hwy SE, Aumsville, OR 97325

**What:**
Tractor Safety Training and Certification course sponsored by the OSU Extension Service. Training will include classroom work, homework and tractor driving.

**Who:**
This is for youth, ages 14-17, who are interested in summer employment opportunities in the upcoming agricultural season.

**Why:**
Farmers who employ minors are required to hire those who have completed and passed a tractor safety training program.

**Fee:**
$95 nonrefundable after May 15th

**Deadline:**
Friday, June 5th, 2020 or when class is full

**Registration:**

For information:
Oregon State University Extension Service
Linn County Extension
Andrea Leao, 541-730-3534
[andrea.leao@oregonstate.edu](mailto:andrea.leao@oregonstate.edu)

Oregon State University Extension Service prohibits discrimination in all its programs, services, activities, and materials on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, marital status, disability, or when class is full.

[http://extension.oregonstate.edu/linn](http://extension.oregonstate.edu/linn)

http://extension.oregonstate.edu/linn

MAY–JUNE 2020 — 17
Doing Citizen Science While Staying Home

By Jody Einerson and Brad Withrow-Robinson

Staying home is a challenge to many individuals and families. Cabin Fever is real, even if no causal pathogen has yet been isolated. If you find yourself in need of diversion, one acceptable way to get some is to participate in Citizen Science.

Citizen science is something that you can do from home (remember, no OSU related travel allowed for faculty or volunteers), and yet still remotely connect with others in a helpful way. Your contributions are a way to interact, keep busy and help local and national research all at the same time. It is a great family activity as well, so get your partners, family members, and housemates involved with you. There are several options.

If you are already a member of one of OSU Extension’s citizen science programs, such as Oregon Season Tracker, Oregon Master Naturalist, or Oregon Bee Project, it is a great time to double down on your contributions and/or learning. All are doing their best to support our volunteers.

Not involved in a citizen science program yet? Some Citizen Science programs offer online or hybrid training programs. In some cases, that will be all it takes. In others, the online training alone may not be enough to get you certified as a volunteer, but can be a fun and interesting learning project at this time. Here is a local option to consider.

Oregon Season Tracker is a citizen science program of Forestry Natural Resources and 4-H Extension, centered in Benton County. OST volunteers make and report regular observations on precipitation and plant phenology (seasonal changes of plants, such as budbreak and flowering) through CoCoRaHS and Natures Notebook, our two national partners. OST is now offering the online portion of the OST training FREE, with local in-person portion to be offered as allowed. Visit the OST website http://oregonseasontacker.forestry.oregonstate.edu/ for more information about the training, and options for becoming a volunteer remotely.

Want to get involved with citizen science but don’t feel like this is the right fit for you? Oregon Master Naturalist Stay at Home Resources page https://extension.oregonstate.edu/mn/stay-home-resources-master-naturalists lists other citizen science opportunities. Or you can search for a variety of projects to join from astronomy to transportation at the SciStarter website https://scistarter.org/.

Stay well, and have fun.

Forest Education Sprouts from Linn Seedling Sale

Buoyed by continued success of its Annual Seedling Sale, the Linn County Small Woodlands Association (LCSWA) board members have increased scholarship and educational funding commitments this year. The group thanks its volunteers and everyone who purchased seedlings to make this possible.

LCSWA uses the sale to fund university-level forestry scholarships as well as 4-H scholarships related to forestry activities.

4-H members, their parents and LCSWA member volunteers spend one day packaging pre-orders and the following morning being ready for walk-in sales and pickups.

“It was a resounding success,” Bonnie Marshall, seedling sale chairwoman, told directors. “Thanks to all the volunteers and the amazing people that make it happen.”

Roughly 500 hours of volunteer time was put in over the weekend of the sale, according to Fay Sallee, LCSWA education committee chairwoman. Seventy-five people, she said, staffed the event—including 4-H members and the current three university scholarship recipients.

“The bottom line is we have tremendous support for this event from a lot of people and we really thank them all,” said Sallee.

Overall, Marshall said, 11,600 seedlings were sold. That is up from 9,000 plants a year earlier.

Based on the robust seedling sales, directors agreed to increase scholarships for Oregon university forestry students to $2,000. The board also agreed to use $7,000 from past seedling sale profits to join five other OSWA chapters in the Oregon Natural Resources Education Fund that supports high school forestry projects.

Along with the annual seedling sale, the Local Woods Fair — a woody-goods fest — also attracted land owners and others with interested in Oregon forestry and wood products.

“Turnout was good for chapter volunteers as well as patrons,” said Lee Peterman, chapter president. “Vendors seemed pleased with sales.”

“The focus on the ‘other-side-of-the-hall’ from the seedling sale was on educational and informational resources to small land-owners in addition to the traditional vendors of products from local forest-land artisans,” explained Peterman.

The Linn County Small Woodlands Association is a non-profit organization with about 120 family memberships.
Stay at Home Woodland & Forestry Resources

Family woodland owners (like farmers, ranchers, beekeepers and others) typically have busy spring schedules with lots to do in the woods. Many of those activities come with acres of physical distancing from others outside their families, so life remains busy.

Although our offices are closed, OSU Extension remains an available and useful source of information for doing many spring woodland activities such as weed control, fire preparedness and prevention, developing wildlife habitat. We remain available by phone or email to answer questions and direct you to the information you need. My contact information is in the banner at the top of the Forestry and Natural Resources page.

The local and state Forestry & Natural Resources Extension team, in developing new, on-line resources to fill the gap created by the Covid-19 driven postponement and cancellation of many of our spring and summer programs. These will include an online version of our Basic Woodland Management class, a series of Tree School–style class webinars, fire preparedness programs, links to newsletters and much more. All will be posted at a new Forestry and Natural Resources Extension Stay at Home Resource page: https://www.forestry.oregonstate.edu/forestry-and-natural-resources/stay-home-fnr

We will do our best to keep you informed of new remote learning through Woodland Compass and Needle electronic mailings. Subscribe free from the FNR page of either Benton or Linn County Extension website.

A Moment in Time continued from Page 11

several different models with variations in sizes, selection, deliveries vs. pick-ups, and payment methods. Some farms are offering boxes to be ordered on a weekly basis, instead of the usual whole or half season.

Regardless, interest has spiked and farms who normally offer CSA’s are struggling to keep up with demand. Meanwhile farms who have not offered CSA in the past have decided to start this year. There can be a steep learning curve for both the farmers and the eaters when first engaging with CSAs. Cautious Optimism Thought: It is so validating to see this purchase spike and will this trend continue after the stay at home order is lifted? Will farms new to the CSA or Produce Box scheme be able to offer a smooth enough experience those customers new to the model want to stay with it?

In addition to CSA’s many farms have turned to online sales. Some already had a platform in place, while others have acted quickly to adopt a new online sales presence. I have to stress how hard this has been for some farms, as they are fitting this in during an already very busy and important establishment period on the farm. Online sales allow customers to purchase food from their homes and from known sources close to home. This is meeting the new demand for bulk purchases (such as nuts, flour, beans), people are stocking up and baking has been on the rise.

Some farms who have the ability are delivering, while others set up pick up/ drop off locations, all of which greatly limit if not eliminate person to person contact. Cautious Optimist Thought: Online sales open a whole new door, and are creating a safer exchange of food for both farmer and eater, however, what farms and/or eaters are excluded from this process due to lack of internet access in rural areas, lack of time or capital by farmers to invest in new sales platform, etc.?

The Albany/Corvallis Farmers market has aggregated some of our region’s online sale options, and you can find them here: http://locallygrown.org/home/online-delivery-pickup-options/ Listings include vendors who have responded (not all market vendors), plus a few non-market vendors. Some additional way to find local food to purchase online or otherwise include:

- Santiam Food Alliance list of farms surrounding Lebanon, Sweet Home, and Scio, https://santiamfood.org/resources/local-farms/
- Calapooia Food Alliance serving Brownsville, OR. Check out their Market Tab and their Buying Tab http://calapooiafoodalliance.org/word/
- In Benton County, there is the Benton County Business Guide which also includes some farms or restaurants who are still delivering https://www.visitcorvallis.com/business-operations

Where else do we access local food? The Farmer’s Markets of course! Fortunately in Oregon they have been recognized in the same category as grocery stores, and deemed essential. As reported in the article ‘Farmers Markets Open for the Season, Following Social Distancing’ in My Oregon

Continued on Page 20
Being Mindlessly Mindful About Our Food

By Hallie Locher, OSU Dietetic intern

Have you ever thought about when you eat certain foods and why? The reasons each of us think about food can vary drastically from one another. Each person’s eating habits can be influenced by: emotions, body image, culture, situation, social influence, hunger, taste, physical activity level or geographic location. This may include goals to eat foods that are delicious, satisfy our hunger, and make our bodies feel energized. Often we listen to our minds before we eat but may discover more wisdom by tuning attention to our bodies first. Both mindful and intuitive eating can help keep those hunger cues on track and continue to let you make healthy choices.

Mindful Eating:
This is the first step of becoming aware of your foods choices and why you make them.
Being a mindful eater means intentionally paying attention to your eating experience without judgment of your choices.

Intuitive Eating:
Is trusting your body’s innate signal to make sustainable food choices.

- Make peace with food: Stop the fight with food; have an unconditional permission to eat.
- Feel fullness: Eat only until satisfaction or 80% full. Slow down, wait until getting seconds
- Cope with emotions: Food doesn’t fix feelings, tackle the initial problems first
- Respect the body: Have one body in this life, LOVE IT!
- Get up and move: Stop focusing on calories and get up and outside doing the exercise you enjoy
- Honor health: Choose foods for health and which satisfy taste buds.

Resources:

- Honor hunger cues: Feed the body with proper fuel

4-H Wildlife Stewards Virtual Summit: June 3-5, 2020
For the first time in 17 years, we will be canceling the 4-H Wildlife Stewards Youth Summit that was scheduled at Jefferson Elementary. Instead, we are hosting a virtual Summit to students involved in our 4-H Wildlife Stewards and Oregon Season Tracker Classrooms.

A Moment in Time continued from Page 19


Every market will look a bit different as it responds to the needs of its community. Some, for example have moved to pre-order and drive thru only. Check in with your local market to find out the latest. Not sure where your closest market is? Find out here: https://www.oregonfarmersmarkets.org/find-a-market. Farmers markets are working closely with state agencies to assure the safest and smoothest operation possible. In this region the Albany/Corvallis Farmers Market has made lots of changes, the market experience is not what it used to be like, but customers can feel assured safety for all is top priority. Learn more about how markets are keeping everyone safe here: http://locallygrown.org/.../keeping-markets-safe-for-everyone/. With less people venturing out, farmers market sales are taking a hit. At this point there is a lot of uncertainty around what sales at Market will be.

Farmers have been asked to consider new practices and strategies to build resilience on their farms, all with mounting uncertainty of what is to come next. They have had to learn new skills and quickly! They have had to adopt additional safety practices and ways of working with social distancing and masks. Have you ever tried to communicate from the top of a tractor with a face mask on and in two different languages? Our local farmers are thinking about how they can increase production or adopt new distribution channels to best to support our community; however that is not without big risk, money, time, stress, and challenges. A lot of the food we eat takes 1-3 years to produce (meat, potatoes, increased egg production) and farmers are tasked with trying to predict if new consumer interest will stay.

We also need farmers to stay healthy, so that they can continue to produce the food we need. This means that they need access to relevant health care and safety information, and have the financial support to keep going and make adjustments if farmers get sick. It has been inspiring to see so many people in our communities supporting our local farms, as well as the large number of organizations and agencies collaborating on support. Thankfully many advocated for the inclusion of small farms in the Federal funding available to businesses, now we wait to see how far that will go. There is so much more to report, alas this is only a tiny snapshot. You can follow our Small Farms COVID-19 page for regular updates and links https://smallfarms.oregonstate.edu/smallfarms/covid-19.

Be well, stay safe, and stay informed! Feel free to reach out to Extension with questions. We are all working from the safety of our homes and available to respond accordingly.